

Painting with Words: The Figurative Language Gallery

Learning objective: To identify, explain, and create examples of figurative language, including similes, metaphors, and personification, to enhance descriptive writing.

Welcome to Zara the Zebra's Art Gallery! Zara has curated a collection of sentences that use figurative language to paint vivid mental images. For each item, identify the technique used (Simile, Metaphor, or Personification) and then explain the effect it has on the reader. Finally, use your imagination to craft your own original figurative description for the gallery.

Word bank: Simile · Metaphor · Personification · Vivid imagery · Comparison · Human attributes

1. 1. 'The golden sun stretched its weary arms across the horizon at the end of the long day.' Identify the figurative language used here. Why might an author choose to describe the sun this way rather than simply saying 'it was sunset'? (2 marks)

2. 2. 'Max the monkey's brain was a lightning-fast computer, calculating sums before the teacher had even finished the question.' Is this a simile or a metaphor? Justify your answer by comparing the two distinct things being linked. (2 marks)

3. 3. 'Pip the caterpillar moved as slowly as a drifting autumn leaf.' Explain why this simile is effective in helping the reader understand Pip's pace. (2 marks)

4. 4. 'The wind whispered secrets through the ancient oak trees.' Which type of figurative language is this? What mood does the word 'whispered' create for the reader? (2 marks)

5. 5. Compare and contrast: How is a metaphor fundamentally different from a simile? Provide one original example of each to demonstrate your understanding. (3 marks)

6. 6. Creative Challenge: Write a sentence using personification to describe a bustling classroom, and a sentence using a metaphor to describe a thunderstorm. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene based on the sentence: 'The stars were shimmering diamonds scattered across a velvet cloak of night.' Label which part of your drawing represents the metaphor.

Extension challenge: Zara the Zebra wants to curate a 'Figurative Language' exhibition. Write a short paragraph (50–80 words) describing a rainy day in a forest using at least one example of a simile, one metaphor, and one piece of personification. Explain why your chosen language makes the scene feel more atmospheric.